

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SINGAP 00264 180926Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----040212 181427Z /44

R 180810Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9417
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 0264

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, VM, SN
SUBJECT: SINGAPORE-VIETNAM RELATIONS -- THIRD COUNTRY INTER-
MEDIARIES

REF: 77 SINGAPORE 5669

1. REFTEL REPORTS THAT FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM, IN
DECEMBER 24 CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR, COMMENTED THAT SRV HAD
APPROACHED SINGAPOREANS INDIRECTLY THROUGH THIRD PARTIES
TO SOUND OUT GOS WILLINGNESS TO EXTEND INVITATION TO VICE
PREMIER NGUYEN DUY TRINH TO VISIT SINGAPORE DURING HIS RECENT
TOUR OF ASEAN CAPITALS. (DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT RELATIONS
WERE STRAINED AT THAT TIME BECAUSE OF AIR VIETNAM
HIJACKING INCIDENT.) GOS HAD RESPONDED BY SUGGESTING THAT SRV
MAKE DIRECT APPROACH TO GOS, RAJA SAID, AND HANOI HAD
EVENTUALLY DROPPED THE MATTER. RAJA BELIEVED THAT HANOI'S
USE OF INTERMEDIARIES STEMMED NOT FROM CONSIDERATIONS OF FACE
BUT FROM SRV INTEREST IN TURNING INTERMEDIARIES INTO "ERRAND
BOYS" BY EXPLOITING THEIR EAGERNESS TO SERVE. HE DID NOT IDENTIFY
THE INTERMEDIARIES OTHER THAN TO INDICATE THAT THEY WERE FROM
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FELLOW ASEAN COUNTRY.

2. EMBOFF SUBSEQUENTLY DISCUSSED THIS INCIDENT BRIEFLY IN EARLY
JANUARY CONVERSATION WITH DIRECTOR OF MINDEF SECURITY AND
INTELLIGENCE DIVISION S.R. NATHAN. IN ANSWER TO EMBOFF'S QUERY,
NATHAN INDICATED THAT THE INTERMEDIARIES HAD BEEN MALAYSIAN.
HAD THEY BEEN FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY, HE SAID, SINGAPOREANS

MIGHT HAVE RESPONDED. SINCE THEY FELT MALAYSIANS WERE GOING OUT OF THEIR WAY TO ACCOMMODATE SRV, HOWEVER, THEY DECIDED NOT TO RESPOND UNLESS THE SRV APPROACHED THEM DIRECTLY. MESSAGE, ACCORDINGLY, WAS PASSED BACK TO SRV THROUGH MALAYSIANS THAT IF HANOI WAS INTERESTED IN HAVING TRINH VISIT SINGAPORE, SRV SHOULD APPROACH GOS DIRECTLY THROUGH SRV TRADE OFFICE IN SINGAPORE. HOLDRIDGE

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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